

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CH, UR, US

SUBJECT: JAFFE INTERVIEW WITH VICE FONMIN YU CHAN

1. BEGIN SUMMARY - ON DECEMBER 13 CHICAGO DAILY NEWS
CORRESPONDENT SAM JAFFE WAS GIVEN EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND INTERVIEW
WITH VICE FONMIN YU CHAN. TOPICS DISCUSSED WERE CHINA'S
INTERNAL SCENE, U.S. - PRC RELATIONS, AND SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. YU
CHAN STRESSED COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND CONTINUITY OF PRC POLICIES,
INDICATED SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH PROGRESS IN U.S. - PRC RELATIONS,
AND TOOK STANDARD TOUGH LINE ON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. ALTHOUGH
DELETED FROM JAFFE'S REPORT, YU CHAN CONFIRMED THAT LIU
HSIAO-CHI IS STILL ALIVE AND NAMED THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN PEKING
AS THE SOURCE OF MUCH MISINFORMATION ON CHINESE INTERNAL
DEVELOPMENTS. IDENTITY OF YU CHAN AS PRC SPOKESMAN AND FACT THAT
JAFFE HAS PASSED US TEXT OF HIS REPORT MUST BE CAREFULLY PROTECTED.
END SUMMARY.

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2. CHICAGO DAILY NEWS CORRESPONDENT SAM JAFFE HAS PASSED US TEXT OF THE REPORT WHICH HE INTENDS TO FILE DECEMBER 17 BASED ON AN EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND INTERVIEW WITH VICE FONGMIN YU CHAN. MFA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT HAS STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS INTERVIEW, AND JAFFE WAS DELAYED IN LEAVING PEKING FOR TWO DAYS TO ENABLE CHINESE TO DO A WORD BY WORD ANALYSIS OF HIS ARTICLE. GROUND RULES WERE NO IDENTIFICATION OF YU CHAN AND NO DIRECT QUOTATIONS. IT APPEARS THAT CHINESE HAVE CHOSEN THIS VEHICLE TO GO PUBLIC ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES WHICH THEY HAVE ONLY DISCUSSED PRIVATELY BEFORE.

3. PRC INTERNAL SCENE - YU CHAN SAID CHINESE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO SUCCESSION QUESTION AND THAT CHAIRMAN MAO HAD LAID THE BASIS IN THE THREE-IN-ONE COMBINATION OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP. YU CHAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WAS A STRUGGLE GOING ON IN CHINA, BUT CLAIMED THAT IT WAS A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE. HE SCOFFED AT REPORTS OF STRUGGLE BETWEEN MODERATES AND RADICALS AND THE IDEA THAT THE MILITARY WAS TRYING TO ASSUME POWER. HE ASCRIBED MANY OF THESE RUMORS TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN PEKING, BUT THIS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DELETED FROM JAFFE'S REPORT BY THE CHINESE. LATER IN THE INTERVIEW YU CHAN SAID CHINA WAS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THE NPC, NO DATE HAD BEEN SET, BUT IT WOULD NOT BE TOO LONG. YU DISCOUNTED THE FACT THAT CHINA WAS WITHOUT A DEFENSE MINISTER AS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE.

4. U.S. - PRC RELATIONS - ALTHOUGH YU CHAN INDICATED THAT THE GROUND WORK FOR U.S. - PRC RELATIONS WAS LAID BY CHAIRMAN MAO HIMSELF AND THAT, ON THE WHILE, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE DEVELOPING ON THE BASIS OF SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE, HE ADDED THAT PEKING IS NOT COMPLETELY SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS IN NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. HE DESCRIBED U.S. WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM TAIWAN AS A MINOR MOVE AND STATED THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR UNGER TO TAIPEI AND THE OPENING OF TWO ADDITIONAL GRC CONSULATES IN THE U.S. WERE NOT IN CONFORMITY WITH THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. IN ORDER TO FULLY NORMALIZE U.S. - PRC RELATIONS, YU CHAN SAID, THE U.S. MUST A) SEVER DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN, B) ABROGATE ITS TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONALISTS, AND C) COMPLETELY WITHDRAW ITS REMAINING FORCES FROM TAIWAN. HE SAID CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TRADE EXCHANGES WILL CONTINUE, BUT THEY WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE ABSENCE OF RELATIONS. AN EXCHANGE OF NEWS BUREAUS

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WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE SO LONG AS THERE ARE NATIONALIST CORRESPONDENTS IN WASHINGTON.

5. SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS - YU CHAN FOLLOWED STANDARD CHINESE LINE REGARDING SOVIET THREAT, BUT ADDED IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE SOVIETS TO TURN THEIR SPEARHEAD TOWARD THE EAST WITHOUT FIRST HAVING EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST IN THEIR GRASP. HE DESCRIBED THE BORDER NEGOTIATIONS AS BEING AT A COMPLETE STANDSTILL AND SAID

IT IS UP TO THE SOVIETS TO RESUME THEM. CHINA, HE CONCLUDED, DOES NOT ATTACH TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE AGREEMENTS REACHED BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION BECAUSE THEY ARE THE TWO BIGGEST RIVALS IN THE WORLD TODAY.

6. LIU HSIAO-CHI - JAFFE ASKED YU CHAN ABOUT THE HONG KONG TA KUNG PAO ARTICLE WHICH ALLEGED THAT LIU HSIAO-CHI WAS DEAD BOTH POLITICALLY AND PHYSICALLY. YU CHAN DENIED THE STORY AND SAID LIU IS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE. WHEN ASKED IF HE WERE DEAD POLITICALLY, YU CHAN SMILED AND NODDED IN AFFIRMATION. LATER, WHEN JAFFE WAS ASKED TO DELETE THAT PORTION OF HIS REPORT DEALING WITH LIU, HE PROTESTED THAT THE RECORD SHOULD BE SET STRAIGHT. MFA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ARGUED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY DID NOT WANT TO EMBARRASS TA KUNG PAO EDITOR FEI I-MIN.

7. COMMENT: WE THINK THE JAFFE ARTICLE IS SIGNIFICANT ON SEVERAL COUNTS. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, IT IS THE FIRST TIME THE CHINESE HAVE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PACE OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS AND SPECIFICALLY RAISED THE QUESTION OF AMBASSADOR UNGER'S APPOINTMENT AND THE TWO CONSULATES. SECONDLY, YU CHAN'S FORMULATION OF CONDITIONS FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS APPEARS TO US TO BE A SLIGHT HARDENING OF THE PRC'S POSITION. HERETOFORE, WHILE ABROGATION OF ALL TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS WITH TAIWAN WAS IMPLICIT IN THE PRC'S POSITION, THEY HAVE NOT EXPLICITLY RAISED THESE ISSUES IN A PUBLIC FORUM. FINALLY, THE CHOICE OF YU CHAN TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE -- HIS PRIMARY FUNCTION TO DATE HAS BEEN VICE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN AFFAIRS -- SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY BE MOVING INTO A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE MFA HIERARCHY. WITH CHIAO KUAN-HUA, THE MINISTRY'S FORMER PRINCIPLE SPOKESMAN TO THE WEST, NOW ELEVATED TO MINISTERIAL LEVEL, IT SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT YU CHAN MAY ASSUME SOME OF CHIAO'S PUBLIC FUNCTIONS.

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